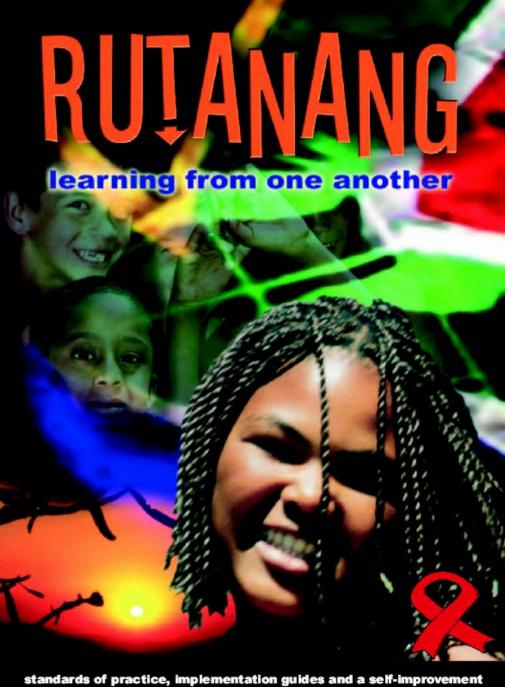
Peer
Education and
OVCs:
Exploring the
Connection

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standards of practice, implementation guides and a self-improvement process for peer education programmes in south africa

### A brief global history of Peer Education

- Strong theoretical and practical basis
- Widely used, mostly preventative
- Confusion about goals and purposes
- Rare evaluation of poorly designed programs
- Isolated programs, much enthusiasm, little rigor
- Lack of data on inputs, outputs, or outcomes
- No standards of practice or concept of system but still considered a choice intervention

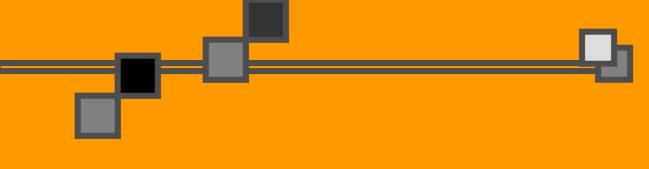
#### **A** National Peer Education System

- Consensus on goals & guidelines for practice across sectors, settings
- Common indicators and unified MIS
- Stable T&TA and tools development capacity tailored to each sector
- Mechanism for mutual support
- Accreditation for performance standards, transferable skills, career path
- Ongoing external formative & summative program and system evaluation





- Purposeful recognition and referral of those in need of help
- Informal influences
- Advocacy and activism



#### Peer Education is NOT...

- A replacement for professional intervention
- Whatever youth says it is
- Awareness events and health fairs
- Energy and style with no content or rigor
- Model youth preaching adult messages
- "What I did when I was your age"
- Designed for peer educators' benefit
- Investing 80% in training PE's, 20% in their work with learners

#### **Advantages of Peer Education**

- Youth learn more readily from peers
- Multiplier effect
- Role models with shared experience
- Peer educators are receptive to learnercentered training, development and supervision

- Positioned and prepared to recognize and refer learners in need
- More appealing to diverse learners
- Flexible delivery system – can work evenings, weekends, many settings

# Graduated Standards and Tools for Ten Essential Elements of Peer Education Programs

- Planning
- Mobilizing
- SupervisorInfrastructure
- Linkages
- Curriculum

- Peer educator infrastructure
- Management
- Recognition/reward
- Evaluation
- Sustainability

### Rutanang Documents A five year consultative process

- Toward Standards of Practice for Peer Education in South Africa
- Peer Education Implementation Guide for NGOs in South Africa
- Peer Education Implementation Guide for Schools in South Africa
- Peer Education Implementation Guide for Higher Education in South Africa
- Peer Education Lesson Plans
- Peer Education Training Manual, in preparation.



#### **SCHOOLS**

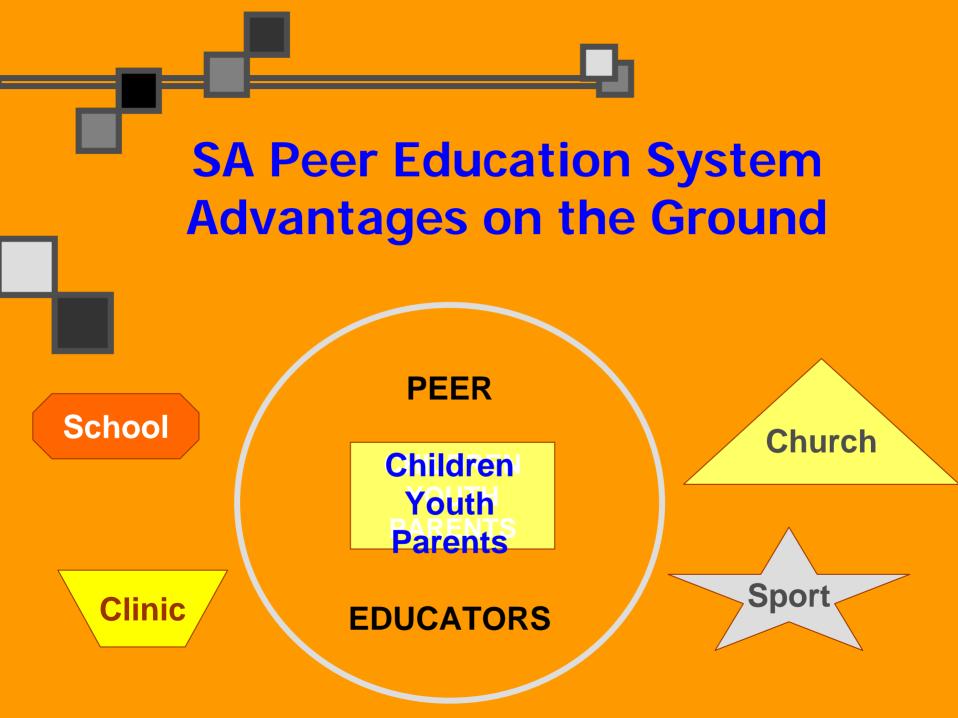
- LS/LO classes
- Clubs
- Informal networks

#### SPORT AND REC

- Teams and clubs
- Self-esteem
- Physical activity

#### **FAITH-BASED**

- Religious schools
- Youth groups
- Weekly services
- Home cells
- Outreach in schools and communities



### Our Themes

- The prevention/OVC connection:
- Why groups: The best way to help yourself is to help others in a similar situation.
- Why peer-led groups: Make caring and being cared for fun and create a compassionate community.
- The OVC/prevention connection: The people with the most against them are often a powerful force for change.
- What OVCs contribute: OVC resilience is not a personal asset but a community and society asset

# Children "construct" reality by interpreting (and misinterpreting) experiences and evidence.

Their coping styles and skills have more to do with how they understand and respond to their situation than to the situation itself.

## The Prevention/OVC Connection

- Some children cannot name the cause of their pain or fear
- Many OVCs cannot ask for help. Quality structured peer education can lead to recognition, disclosure, referral
- Both curriculum and PE training must build in these objectives
- Those not ready to disclose are still able to learn critical perspectives and skills
- Stigma reduction is a social process in which planned educational sessions enable OVCs to hear non-OVCs reject judgment and express compassion

### OVCs Need What ALL Children Need

- Fun
- Connection to school and community
- Safety
- Understanding of what's happening to them
- Protection and prevention mentality
- Support for positive social norms (gender)
- Coping skills
- Support as things change
- Advocacy and voice

# Peer Education within an OVC setting

- Delivery system for active and proactive social learning and engagement at all ages
- An access strategy integrating prevention, promotion of VCT, care and support for OVC's, reducing stigma, sexual violence
- Complements mass media campaigns and prevention to address care and support
- Care and support addressing socioemotional barriers, norms, leadership, advocacy, civic engagement

### What can Peer Educators do in OVC settings?

- Undergo well structured training to understand their 'job' as peer educator
- Exposed to learning skills related to goals of the intervention
- Work in teams with youth using their own experiences
- Find out what learners are doing, needs, how to help
- Help learners examine attitudes and feelings
- Get youth to question what they see and hear

### What can Peer Educators do in OVC settings? (2)

- Know roles and limitations, report to well trained supervisor
- Provide accurate information
- Facilitate good discussion
- Help youth make sense of their situation, assist with coping skills
- Be role models of good behaviour
- Ask good questions
- Recognize distress
- Understand immediate and accurate referral

# Structured mutual support groups

- Proactive primary prevention creates exposure and opportunities for helping
- Name, understand and address problems from child's point of view: homework supervision; understanding HIV; life skills; support groups
- Introducing accessible resources
- Strong supervision
- Keeping OVCs connected to school, congregation, community

# In Conclusion

- Huge numbers of OVCs
- Some are getting to help, and many still need to be recognized and referred to help
- Many children see & experience things they do not understand, need access to coping skills
- OVCs stigmatized and stigma hurts all prevention efforts
- Effects on children not only in their situation, but in the ways they learn to interpret and cope with their situation
- Not enough trained professionals and adults
- Peer education done properly within a broader strategy can contribute to critical OVC needs



Thank You!

The Harvard/Rutanang Collaborative

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